

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS AND INFORMATION

1 GENERAL

- 1.1 These instructions are designed to ensure that all applications are given equal and fair consideration. Please read the instructions carefully as failure to comply with them may invalidate your application.
- 1.2 Please note that references to the “UK Commission” throughout these documents means the UK Commission for Employment and Skills which is an Arms Length Body (ALB), funded by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. References to “You” refer to the Company submitting an application.
- 1.3 These instructions apply equally to the following application documents which have differing purposes and will be used at different times. It will be made clear at the time which document you are being asked to complete and return to us.
- Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) - used to assist the UK Commission in deciding which Companies meet necessary eligibility criteria. The application is likely to be followed by one of the next 3 documents;
 - Invitation to Quote (ITQ) - used by the UK Commission to invite prospective suppliers to quote on a detailed procurement requirement specification for a specific project or specific competency. The project is likely to be low/moderate value, low risk or not particularly complex.
 - Invitation to Tender (ITT) – used by the UK Commission to invite prospective suppliers to write a full tender based on a detailed procurement requirement specification for a specific project or specific competency. The project is likely to be higher value, higher risk or more complex than simply requiring a quote.
 - Request for Proposal (RfP) - used by the UK Commission to invite funded organisations to write a full proposal based on a detailed funding requirement specification for a specific project.
- For simplicity the rest of these instructions will refer to the “application”.
- 1.4 It is important that you provide all the information asked for in the format and order specified. Please contact tenders@ukces.org.uk if you have any doubts as to what is required or you have difficulty in providing the information requested.
- 1.5 All questions asked by Applicants to clarify the specification and requirements should be sent to tenders@ukces.org.uk, we will share those questions and our response publicly via the UK Commission website <http://www.ukces.org.uk/work-with-us/tenders>. The Applicant who asked the original question will remain anonymous.
- 1.6 In order to simplify the application process, you do not need to provide supporting documents, except when specifically requested. However we may ask to see these documents at a later stage as well as seeking clarification to some aspects of your submission.
- 1.7 Please respond to the specification and requirements as fully but concisely as possible.
- 1.8 Our Commercial and Procurement Policies can be accessed by visiting our website at <http://www.ukces.org.uk/work-with-us/tenders> on the right hand side of the page.

1.8.1 Our Commercial Policy incorporates

- A Code of Good Practice
- Transparency
- Environmental Procurement Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Respecting People
- Advertising
- Small & Medium Enterprises
- Innovation

1.8.2 Our Procurement Policy incorporates

- Value for Money
- Competition
- Compliance
- Prompt Payment
- Legal Aspects
- External Consultancy
- Other Government Initiatives
- Separation of Duties

1.9 Pre-contract negotiations will not be entered into.

1.10 The UK Commission will not reimburse any costs of preparing any application.

2 INDUCEMENTS

2.1 Offering an inducement of any kind in relation to obtaining this or any other contract with the UK Commission will disqualify your application from being considered and may constitute a criminal offence.

3 CONFIDENTIALITY

3.1 It is your responsibility to ensure that the price and delivery information in your application is not disclosed to any other party before the submission deadline. Failure to comply with these conditions may disqualify your tender.

3.2 In particular, you are required not to:

- tell anyone else what your price is or will be;
- try and obtain any information about anyone else's application before the deadline;
or
- make arrangements with another organisation about whether or not they should apply, or about their or your price.

4 INCOMPLETE OR INACCURATE APPLICATIONS

4.1 Applications may be rejected if the information asked for is not given at the time.

- 4.2 You may submit revised applications electronically (5 below) up to the closing time and date. You should state in the e-mail body text of the revision that any previous application has been superseded.
- 4.3 The UK Commission will only review the most recent e-mail application and discard all others for each Company. Once the application submission date has expired you will not have the opportunity to amend or alter your submission.
- 4.4 Please note that the UK Commission reserves the right to vary the dates in the published timetable as circumstances dictate, but will endeavour to notify you as considered appropriate.
- 4.5 Please ensure that the current Policies and Procedures Criteria, which are part of the tender document, are submitted.

5 ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION

- 5.1 An electronic copy of the application should be e-mailed to tenders@ukces.org.uk (which is a confidential, restricted access e-mail account) by the due date the subject of the e-mail should be the application reference number and the title of the tender.
- 5.2 By submitting an application electronically please be aware that:
- Submitting your application or copying it to any other UK Commission e-mail address, or personal e-mail address of a UK Commission staff member will invalidate it;
 - It is your responsibility to ensure that copies of any electronic document or attachments are appropriately secure and “tamper” proof;
 - E-mails containing large files as attachments can be delayed or blocked by e-mail systems. To minimise delays in submission caused by technical difficulties e-mails should not be greater than 10mb in size. If necessary attachments should be compressed or zipped and pictures or photographs should be removed;
 - Submissions which are bordering on the 10mg limit MAY NOT reach the Tenders inbox.
 - All submissions which reach the Tenders inbox will trigger an automated email response confirming receipt, individual personal receipt emails will not be sent.
 - If you DO NOT receive this automated email response your submission has NOT been received.
 - Late submissions will not be considered, whatever the cause of the delay.

6 PAPER SUBMISSION

- 6.1 It is the UK Commission's preference that applications are received electronically. Receipt of electronic copies will take precedence over the receipt of a paper copy.
- 6.2 In the event that a paper copy of the application is submitted please be aware that:
- Envelopes and packages must bear no reference to your company by name;
 - Franking machines which automatically print the company's name should not be used;
 - Envelopes must be addressed marked “TENDER – PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL”, with the name of the Project and the closing date prominently marked on the envelope. Submitting your paper application in any other manner will either invalidate it, or it may not be forwarded to the correct person;

- Paper copies must be delivered to reach the UK Commission by the same closing time and date as electronic copies; and
- Late applications will not be considered, whatever the cause of the delay.

7 NO SUBMISSION

- 7.1 If having read our invitation you decide not to respond, please e-mail your reasons (though you are under no obligation to do so) to tenders@ukces.org.uk and include “No Application” in the body of the e-mail.

8 RECEIPT AND ACCEPTANCE

- 8.1 Applications will be received up to the time and date stated. Those received before the due date will be retained unopened until then and cannot be accessed by the UK Commission Project Manager.
- 8.2 It is your responsibility to ensure that your application is delivered no later than the appointed time.
- 8.3 The UK Commission accepts no responsibility for applications that were received after the stated deadline, whatever the cause of the delay.
- 8.4 By inviting you to apply, the UK Commission is not bound in any way and does not have to accept any application.

9 EVALUATION CRITERIA

- 9.1 The process will be conducted in a manner that ensures applications are evaluated fairly to ascertain a shortlist of Companies, ultimately identifying those that will be awarded a contract.
- 9.2 The criteria by which your written proposal will be evaluated will be published as part of the Invitation to Tender or Invitation to Quote, along with an sub-weighting.

10 AWARD OF CONTRACT

- 10.1 Whilst every endeavour has been made to give you an accurate description of the UK Commission's requirement and specification, you should make your own assessment about the methods and resources needed to meet those requirements.
- 10.2 The ultimate award of the contract will be based on the ability to interpret the specification and successfully meet the evaluation criteria.
- 10.3 You should note that no invoices will be paid until the awarded contract has been signed according to the UK Commission's requirements. It is entirely the successful Company's risk to commence work for the UK Commission before the contract is properly agreed and signed.

11 DEBRIEFING

- 11.1 Following the award of the contract, debriefing will be available to unsuccessful Companies on written request. Once the contract has been awarded the UK Commission will not enter into any further negotiation with unsuccessful Companies.